

Forest, Sunday

July 1913

TELEPHONE:
5043 HAMPSTEAD P.O.

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FROM
SIDNEY LOW,
24, MARLBOROUGH HILL,
N.W.

July 29th, 1913.

Dear Sir Edmund Walker,

You may perhaps recollect that I had the honour of being presented to you by Professor Kyle, at Lord Grey's Dominion House luncheon the other day - when I listened to a very judicious and apposite speech by you.

I told you something of the proposal for promoting Imperial Studies in the University of London. I now forward a paper I read upon the subject before the British Academy, and a confidential memorandum giving the outline of the scheme.

The idea is briefly to establish a faculty or department in the University of London for the study of the history, economics, laws, and institutions of the British Empire. We have, I regret to say, nothing of the sort at present. There are no means of obtaining sound and scholarly instruction on the subjects mentioned, nor are young Englishmen much better informed about them than they were a generation ago. It is nobody's business to study Imperial history and institutions, except that of the journalists and politicians; the result is that we have few books upon these topics which are much more than partisan pamphlets, intended to promote Tariff Reform or some other movement in party politics. We have no machinery, like your

excellent Champlain Society, for publishing the works on early colonisation, &c., for which such ample materials exist in the Record Office here. Nor have we anything like the École Coloniale in Paris which publishes valuable monographs and studies.

The project has the approval of Lord Grey, Lord Milner, Lord Haldane, and Mr. Harcourt. The authorities of London University, University College, King's College, and the School of Economics, are quite willing to have regular courses of lectures and classes on Imperial subjects and to recognise them in the University Examinations for degrees and honours. You will see that the full scheme, outlined in the enclosed type-written memorandum, contemplates a number of professorships and readerships in general Imperial history, law, and economics, with special lecturers or readers for each Dominion. This however could only develop gradually. But an excellent beginning would be made if a Chair of Imperial History could be founded and endowed in the University of London, or a single one of the Dominion Readerships. The amount required for the Professorship is about £20,000; for a Readership £10,000.

I hope that the project may commend itself to you, and that you may even be disposed to bring it before wealthy and public-spirited Canadians like Sir William Macdonald, Sir William Mackenzie, Sir Henry Pellatt, and others, who might be disposed to give it financial support. The foundation of such a professorship as that which is suggested would do more than most

current projects to promote the real unity of the Empire and the close intercourse between the intellectual leaders of its various Communities. What could be better than to have an able young Canadian scholar, for instance, sent for a term of years to occupy a Chair in London University, and to act as a kind of academic "High Commissioner" for the Dominion?

If anybody in Canada is inclined to support the enterprise I hope he will communicate with Lord Milner; or with the Principal of King's College, Strand, London, W.C.; or with me.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

Kidney Low

(M.A. Oxon; late Lecturer
in English History at
King's College).

Sir Edmund Walker, C.V.O., LL.D.,
T o r o n t o.

Confidential.

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From Sidney Low,
24, Marlborough Hill,
London, N.W.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

Department of Imperial Studies.

(A Department devoted to the promotion of knowledge and the imparting of instruction relating to the history, geography, economics, jurisprudence, anthropology and sociology of the institutions and social conditions of the British Empire and its constituent parts; in comparison with the institutions and social conditions that exist or have existed in other Empires or aggregations of races and peoples)

It is suggested that the Department of Imperial Studies should have its own Council, appointed annually by the Senate, which should include representatives of the donors, the Colonial and India Offices, the self-governing Dominions, India, the principal Crown Colonies, &c. This Council, which might have its own President, acting Chairman and Secretary, would exercise a general supervision over the studies included in the Department. It might

- (a) receive periodical reports as to their progress;
- (b) have laid before it annually the complete scheme of work;
- (c) make criticisms, suggestions and recommendations to the Senate, Academic Council, the Faculties and the Boards of Studies;

(d) consider and arrange for the publication of records, theses, &c; and

(e) arrange for the collection of the necessary funds.

(The Faculties with which the Council for Imperial Studies would be in communication would be those for (a) Arts, (b) Science and (c) Economics and Political Science (including Commerce and Industry); which have the oversight of the teaching and examinations in the subjects concerned.

The Boards of Studies concerned would be those dealing with:-

History
Geography
Economics and Political Science
Law
Sociology
Anthropology)

The following conspectus is offered as some indication both of what is already being provided and of what is required in the Department of Imperial Studies.

TEACHING.

I. Geography.

The geographical conditions affecting (1) the British Empire as a whole;

(2) The components of the Empire; (a) Australia, (b) New Zealand, (c) Canada and Newfoundland, (d) the Mediterranean dependencies, (e) India, (f) Malaya, (g) The Pacific Ocean, (h) South Africa.

(3) The principal industries within the Empire, such as (a) the production of cereals, (b) of wool and other textile material, (c) of meat, (d) of fish, (e) of timber, (f) of gold and other metals, (g) of coal and other fuels, &c.

II. History.

- (1) The History of the British Empire as such, and of the "Imperial idea".
- (2) The history of England with special reference to (a) its "expansion" and colonizing, and (b) the Colonial Policy of the British Government.
- (3) The separate history of the other component parts of the Empire, including that of their social and constitutional development,
 - (a) India
 - (b) the Canadian Dominion
 - (c) Newfoundland
 - (d) Australia
 - (e) New Zealand
 - (f) the Mediterranean Dependencies
 - (g) the dependencies in the Pacific Ocean and the Far East
 - (h) the Malay Peninsula
 - (i) South Africa.

III. Political Science.

- (1) An account, analytic, descriptive and historical, of the present quasi federal Constitution of the British Empire as such, with past and present proposals for change.
- (2) The political institutions of the several parts of the Empire.
 - (a) The British Constitution, present and past, including Local as well as Central Government.
 - (b) ditto of the Canadian Dominion
 - (c) " of Newfoundland
 - (d) " of the Commonwealth of Australia
 - (e) " of the Dominion of New Zealand
 - (f) " of the Union of South Africa
 - (g) " of the Mediterranean Dependencies
 - (h) " of India
 - (i) " of the Malay Peninsula
 - (j) " of the Pacific and Far Eastern Dependencies.

IV. Law.

- (1) The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council as the Supreme Court of Appeal: its history, its jurisdiction, its practice.

(2) The legal systems of the Empire.

- (a) The elementary principles of English Common Law.
- (b) The Roman Dutch Law of South Africa, Ceylon Mauritius, British Guiana, &c.
- (c) Mahomedan Law.
- (d) Hindoo Customary Law.
- (e) The Code Napoleon.
- (f) The Old French Law of Lower Canada.
- (g) The Problems presented by the Conflict of Laws within the Empire (contracts, negotiable instruments, marriage and divorce, domicile and civic status, copyright, testamentary succession and inheritance, double taxation, &c.)

(3) International Law.

V. Economics (Including Commerce and Industry)

(1) The Economic Conditions of the British Empire, especially as regards

Transport
Communication
Mutual Commerce
Customs Tariffs
Imperial Taxation or
Contributions to a Common Fund.

(2) The Economics of the component parts of the Empire including social and industrial conditions and problems.

- (a) The United Kingdom
- (b) The Dominion of Canada
- (c) Newfoundland
- (d) The Australian Commonwealth
- (e) New Zealand
- (f) The Union of South Africa
- (g) The Mediterranean Dependencies
- (h) India
- (i) Malaya
- (j) The Pacific Ocean and the Far Eastern Dependencies.

(3) The Economics of the several industries of the Empire - the production, manufacture and distribution of

- (a) foodstuffs; (b) clothing; (c) metals; (d) timber and wood products, &c.

- (4) The Sources of Power within the Empire -
 - (a) coal
 - (b) oil
 - (c) water power
 - (d) the possible developments of electricity.

VI. Anthropology.

A comparative study of the several races or divisions of men within the Empire, (a) Caucasian, (b) Asiatic, (c) African, (d) Malay and Australasian, &c.

VII. Sociology.

A comparative and historical study of the development of social tissue and social organism, in the different parts of the Empire.

Towards the above studies, the University of London has at present:-

- (a) The courses on General and Constitutional History (mostly English) at University College for the B.A. and M.A. degrees; together with courses on Economics, Geography, Law, &c., at that institution.
- (b) At the London School of Economics and Political Science, various courses of lectures on Geography, History, Law, Political Science, Sociology, Anthropology, and Economics, and much of the total work of the Professors, Readers and Lecturers would fall within the proposed Department.
- (c) There is also the provision to be taken into account that is made in these subjects, chiefly by way of preparation for the B.A. and M.A. degrees, at King's College, Bedford College, Westfield College, the East London College, the Birkbeck College, &c.
- (d) The laboratories, economic collections, and special courses of the Imperial Institute, and those of the School of Tropical Medicine; together with the libraries of the Colonial Office, the India Office and the Royal Colonial Institute, must not be forgotten.

Languages may be assumed to be provided for in the School of Oriental Languages now being established at the London Institution.

What is lacking is

- i) to give unity of idea, and concentration, to all these scattered studies and agencies;
- ii) to give them dignity and attractiveness;
- iii) to supplement the existing provision, and fill up the gaps.

It is suggested that what is desirable is not to seek to create a new "institution", but to establish a new "Department" of the University, charged specially to foster and unify these studies.

What seem to be required are

- 1. A Professorship in the History and Constitution of the British Empire (£600 to £800 a year at least)
- 2. A Professorship in Comparative Law, with special reference to the Laws of the British Empire.
- 3. A Professorship in Imperial Economics, Transport and Communications, with special reference to the Transport and Communication problems and the Fiscal Systems of the British Empire.
- 4. A Professorship of Anthropology and Ethnology, with special reference to the races of the British Empire.
- 5. Readerships (£400 a year at least) for the special exposition and study of the History, Institutions and Economics of
 - (a) Australia
 - (b) New Zealand
 - (c) Canada
 - (d) South Africa
 - (e) Malaya
 - (f) the Pacific Dependencies and the Far East
 - (g) the Mediterranean Dependencies
 - (h) India
 - (i) Newfoundland

These "Readers", at any rate those for the self-governing Dominions, would serve as permanent representatives in London of the intellectual interests of each community. They might conceivably be chosen from the Professoriates of the Colonial Universities and sent to lecture in London for a term of years and then recalled to be replaced by competent successors.

6. A series of Imperial Scholarships, tenable in London, to be founded and awarded by the several parts of the Empire.
7. Provision for the publication of
 - (a) Records
 - (b) Theses, or other results of research relating to the Department of Imperial Studies.
8. Though a new and separate institution building need not at present be contemplated, there might be provision made for the accommodation of the additional Professors and Readers and Students. This could be done by a comparatively small expenditure on one of the existing sites (for instance by completing additions now being made to the building of the London School of Economics, or possibly by adding to the accommodation at University College, King's College, or the Imperial Institute.)

